DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 395 313 CS 215 278

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TITLE Specialized Training in Process Writing.
PUB DATE 3 Apr 96
NOTE 52p.; M.A. Project, Kean College of New Jersey.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) --
Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; Elementary Education; *Expository Writing; Grade 3; Grade 4; *Writing Improvement; *Writing Instruction; *Writing Processes; Writing Research; Writing Tests
IDENTIFIERS New Jersey (Plainfield); *Process Approach (Writing)

ABSTRACT

Many educators are concerned with how writing should be taught, especially in the elementary grades. Many teachers are under the impression that when they have their students write simple sentences using vocabulary words and punctuation marks, they are teaching their students that this is writing. In traditionally taught classes, the elementary curriculum stresses that the mechanics of writing be considered when students express themselves in their writing. When taught properly, the writing process approach helps students to understand how the conventions reinforce the meaning of their papers when they are writing to exchange meaning. A study hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between expository writing samples of students instructed in these different methods--process approach and traditional. Subjects consisted of 5 boys and 7 girls in grade 3 and 6 boys and 5 girls in grade 4 in a Plainfield, New Jersey school. The experimental sample was introduced to process writing; they were offered prewriting activities such as creating a web, words that related to the idea, for given topic. The control sample of students worked independently. The only guidance they were given were the skills taught in the language arts period. No significant differences between the samples were found. Nevertheless, the study concluded that if the process of teaching writing improves then the product of written work will improve. (Contains 4 tables of data, a section on related research, and 10 references. Appendixes contain raw test scores.) (TB)

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Specialized Training in Process Writing

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Presented in Partial Fullfillment of its Requirement for the

Master of Arts Degree

Kean College of New Jersey

April 3, 1996

Accepted
4/3/96
Albert J. Magnus

CS215278

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of process writing on expository writing taught to third and fourth grade students when compared to a traditional approach. The overall writing samples were evaluated based on mechanics and building of coherent paragraphs using skills taught during the language arts period. No significant difference between the samples were found.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz (Chairperson of the Department of Communication Science at Kean College of New Jersey) and Dr. Ronald Frye (Director of Compliance and Resource Development) Plainfield Board of Education, for their valuable cooperation, guidance, time, and patience that made the completion of this study possible.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my husband, Jerome Jackson; my two sons Kareem and Jamaal Jackson. I appreciate their understanding for the many hours needed to do this study.

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Competency tests on students writing ability have caused many educators to become more concern with the quality of writing done by students. Many educators who must teach students how to write are concern with how writing should be taught especially in the elementary grades. Many teachers are under the assumption that when they have their students write simple sentences using vocabulary words and punctuation marks, they are teaching their students that this is writing. Teachers should be trained intensively through several inservice workshops in order to prepare them on how to be good at instructing the teaching of writing (Grave, 1995).

In traditionally taught classes, the elementary curriculum stresses that the mechanics of writing be considered when students express themselves in their writing.

Graves (1978) found that a lot of students written expressions were being completed through workbook exercises, drills in penmanship, vocabulary, spelling punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. These necessary basic writing skills have been used in a record-keeping system and mandated testing programs (Ruddell, 1985). Teachers and their students are being held accountable for worksheet completions, and assessment of the traditional taught skills. In this traditional taught approach, researcher have found that students were not spending enough quality time with writing.

Using the writing process approach, Graves (loc. cit.) states that the skills of using punctuation marks, spelling, and grammar correctly in sentences identified as the conventions of writing and knowing how to use the convention correctly. The convention of writing includes teaching students that letters go from left to right on a page, the spacing between words, capital letters at the beginning of a sentence and knowing that is where a new sentence starts. But, how is this technique different from the traditional approach to teaching students how to write?

When taught properly, the writing process approach helps the students to understand how the conventions reinforce the meaning of their paper when they are writing to exchange meaning (Graves, Ibid). Students should be able to use the conventions of writing as naturally as the way they speak. Students will use a word or a convention incorrectly, but after several practices, they will understand the right way of using words and the conventions properly. The convention of writing is not important at the draft stage of writing, because the students have a hard time with meaning of their paper at this early stage. Students should concentrate on the main idea of their papers and teachers should not insist on full accuracy in early draft stage when using the writing process approach. The draft stage

is when the students focus on the idea of their writings in which the use of conventions become easier to understand.

Teachers should be instrumental in the development of the students' mechanical skills by encouraging them to notice how the conventions of written language are used in printed texts and by making them responsible for gradually learning and applying such skills in their writing. During the writing process, teachers should model by composing on the chalkboard, chart paper, or overhead to get the children to shape their writing (Weaver, 1988).

Students learn to write by writing extensively according to Noyce and Christie (1989). The writing process is most often described as a series of interactive, recursive steps involving the prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Process oriented classrooms have a workshop atmosphere that promotes the learning of skill while writing is in progress rather than after a paper has been corrected by the teacher. The use of revision of writing should be a natural tool. Students should learn the mechanics of writing in the context of reading and writing.

According to research, teachers using the traditional

in writing. Through this writing process method, students are expected to write as naturally as the way they speak.

Hypothesis

To provide evidence on this topic, the following study was undertaken. It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the writing samples of students instructed by the different approaches.

Procedures

This study took place in an urban/suburban elementary school in Plainfield, New Jersey. It consisted of two grade levels- grade three with 5 boys and 7 girls and grade four with 6 boys and 5 girls for a total of 24 students in the same classroom. The make up of the population of the class was 23 Black students and one Latino female fourth grader. This study lasted four weeks.

All students were instructed on the conventions of writing during the language arts period in the morning before lunch. The writers' workshop began in the afternoon and lasted forty during a normal school day. Both samples were introduced to the style of expository writing which was used to conduct this study on the writing samples of the students. The students

had to write a paragraph that gave information on a topic that was chosen by the teacher, and to create a topic sentence and supporting details for the given topic. The students also had to explain ideas, give directions, or show how to do something and were expected to use transitional words such as first, next, then, and finally correctly in the paragraph they wrote.

The experimental sample of students was introduced to the process writing approach in a writing workshop setting. They were given a step by step methodology for writing which progressed into paragraph writing assignments. This sample was offered prewriting activities such as creating a web, words that related to the idea, for the given topic. This was used to help organize their thoughts. The students in the experimental experimental were allowed conference time with the teacher for extra help with a topic sentence for their paragraphs. This sample of students were not expected to submit their paper at the end of the writing period nor were they expected to have a finished product at the end of the day. However a finished product was expected at the end of the week.

The control sample of students worked independently. The only guidance this sample had was the skills taught during the language arts period. These skills taught were to aid in writing

a coherent expository paragraph. They were not allowed conference time with the teacher, but they had to write a complete paper on the first day and submit it at the end of each period for corrections. The papers were given back to the students in this group with the necessary corrections. These students had to rewrite their papers, make corrections and resubmit for further evaluation.

Both samples were scored on a scale of 0-100. They were evaluated on creating a topic sentence for the chosen topic and supporting details, capitalization and punctuation, and the correct use of order words for a clear written paragraph. The scores included the used proofreading techniques such as indenting the beginning of a paragraph, the use mechanics which focused on punctuation marks and capital letters correctly, grammar, and sentence structure. Students were evaluated on neatness of their handwriting skills, spacing of words, and proper spacing from the title to the paragraph.

Results

The results of specific skills that were being monitored in the sample writing are presented in tables one through four. Each table presented will show the samples' ability in the skills at the time of this study. The control sample appeared to do

slightly better than the experimental sample in all areas of skills presented except proofreading.

Table one indicates the samples' ability to use capital

Table I

Capitalization and punctuation

Sample	M	SD	t	significance
Experimental	26.25	13.10	-1.3	<.05
Control	38.20	26.22		

letters and punctuation marks appropriately during the editing stage of writing. The results indicate a t of -1.3 which shows there was no significance difference between the results of the writing approaches. The difference between the mean of the control sample and the mean of the experimental sample is 11.95. The control sample did slightly better than the experimental sample in this area.

Table II shows the samples' ability to create a topic sentence and supporting details. The samples had to show the three basic parts, the topic sentence, the body, and the closing

Table II

Main idea and supporting detail

Sample	M	SD	t	significance
Experimental	57	10.05	-.13	<.05
Control	62.8	10.4		

of the paragraph. The results in this area show a t of -.13 which indicate no significant difference between the samples. The difference of 5.81 in the means show the control sample as being slightly higher than the experimental sample in this area.

Table III shows the results of ability of the samples to revise and to make improvements during the revision stage of writing. A t of -.02 indicated that there was no significant

Table III

Revision

Sample	M	SD	t	significance
Experimental	55.4	30.03	-.02	<.05
Control	61	23.7		

difference between the samples. The difference in the means of the two samples is 5.6 which is in favor of the control samples.

Table IV indicates mastery of proofreading the final draft.

Table IV

Proofreading

Sample	M	SD	t	significance
Experimental	76	17	.08	.05
Control	66	18		

During the proofreading stage, all of the mechanics such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are being revised. In this area, the experimental group appeared to do better than the control group. The results show a t of .08 in favor of the experimental group. The difference in the mean is 10. However, there was no significant difference in this area.

Conclusions and Implications

The information in this study shows that writing is not an easy task. Neither approach produced perfection or

significantly better skills at the conclusion of the study and so the hypothesis of the study was accepted. Writing is a skill that must be taught just as in math, reading, or any other subjects. There is an implication of writing as a process that students can master if instructed properly. It is a skill that cannot be taught just once. This study shows that no significant difference in the mean scores of its two sample result from using two different approaches to teaching writing, but it also indicates that writing is a skill that cannot be taken for granted. In comparing the two samples, the experimental sample did slightly better than the control sample in the proofreading stage. No intensive reading is required when proofreading to check for capital letters at the beginning of a sentence. The reader simply skims to the end punctuation and determines if the letter following that end mark is capitalized.

The results in this study show if the process of teaching writing improves then the product of written work will improve. Students must be guided and given the opportunity to use their personal experience, memory and imagination when writing a paper on a given topic. As a tradition, mechanics of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are just as important as the other elements in writing. The students seem to be more aware of the use of mechanics when there are correction on papers he/she completes.

Process Writing and Related Literature

Children want to communicate their ideas, they want to learn and they want to have the language ability to be successful in school. Many classrooms organization of the writing program take place in three stages, from traditional, to improved, to the kind of situation suggestion suggested by current thinking and research, Hillerich (1985).

Traditional writing classes usually have the students doing the same thing at the same time and focus on assigning, writing, and correcting. Improvement usually takes place through during the writing period, teaching of skills, teacher participation in writing and conferencing, and emphasis on someone reading and reaching to the content of the paper.

The goal is flexible within the writing period, turning the writing period into a workshop, writing at many periods for the purposes, peer participation in revision, and conferencing as a focus for determining needs, recording progress, and giving individual help. Improving the process will guarantee improvement in the product.

A comparative study done by Sharon K. Monteith (1991) compared writing score and attitudes of second grade students in a traditional writing classroom and a writing process classroom. Most students were Caucasian and majority were

from low-income families. The instrument used to assess the dependent variable in the experiment was a sample writing project presented to second grade teachers as an example of the Stanford Achievement Test in writing that will be administered to second grade students in the following year.

The experimental group was made up of 25 second-grade students in a writing process classroom. These students were given a block of writing time of between 30 to 45 minutes every day for writing. This time was for journal writing or writing in their notebooks The writing notebooks contained a variety of genre: stories, plays, poems, commercials, and others. The writing notebook materials were discussed in conferences with the teacher and peers during the editing process. It was noted that not all pieces of writing were brought to the publishing stage. The agreed upon materials by student and teacher were to be published. The books were shared in the classroom, with other classes and at home.

The control group consisted of 26 students in traditional classroom from the same rural school. This group was taught language, using the traditional skills method. In this method, the class as a whole covered a particular skill in the language book and a skill in the language book and a skill sheet from

the workbook. The skills approach is a form of mechanics only writing. The content of any writing was examined only for correct application of the skill or for whatever the desired product was in the lesson.

In all other areas of content, the experimental group and the control group were instructed in a traditional manner. The two teachers used the same textbooks and evaluation methods in the other content area.

The scores from the writing projects were collected and compared for the difference between the medians of the two groups. Each group's writing samples were analyzed to produce a range of the number of words and sentences used. The students in each group were interviewed in a writing attitude survey concerning their ideas about themselves as writers.

The results were presented in two sections: Findings concerning students' ability to express thoughts in writing and their ideas about themselves as writers.

The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine the mean rank between the experimental group and the control group, as the data were ordinal. The mean rank of the experimental group

was substantially higher than the mean rank of the control group. The difference was statistically significant, indicating that students who received the writing process instruction obtained significantly higher writing scores than did those receiving the traditional instruction.

Each writing sample received a score from level 1 to 7. None of the children in the experimental group received a score of level 1 or 2, and only the experimental group received a score level from 7. The experimental group scored 65% of their total scores between level 5 and 7. The control group scored 38.4% of their scored on levels 5 and 6, they received no level 1 and 7 scores.

Words and sentences usage in the experimental group covered a wider range than that of the control group. The experimental group's mean of words was between 26-60, compared to those of the control groups' mean which was between 18-40 words.

The students were interviewed at the end of the school year concerning their attitudes about writing. The questions were geared toward the students' ideas about their writing. All of the students were asked the same questions in a neutral environment. The students were assured that there were no right

or wrong answers when answering the questions. The questions were about how they thought of themselves as writers.

Results indicated that more students in the writing process class than in the traditional classroom considered themselves writers, believed that they learned to write from their teachers and school. The majority of the students in the traditional classroom students feel that they learned to write from their parents. Both groups agreed that practice was important.

Another study,conducted by Linda A. Thomas (1992),shows how exposure to learning writing as process through writing workshop would effect the attitudes toward writing of fifth grade students in a middle-class community located in northeastern New Jersey. The sample of students was limited to a group of one fifth grade class. The class included 14 girls and 14 boys for a total of 28 students.

The students were grouped heterogeneously for homeroom, math, English, social studies, science, physical education, health, music, and art. The reading groups were homogeneously grouped. The current fifth grade was divided into two reading groups. One group was reading in a fifth grade level basal, and the other was reading in a sixth grade reading level basal.

Students were being moved in and out of the class, in which the data collected was from 23 students, 12 females, and 11 males.

The purpose of the study was to determined how exposure to learning writing as process through writing workshop would effect the attitudes toward writing of fifth grade students. Before this study was conducted, the students had no prior experience with the writing process in school. The students' previous writing experiences included workbook pages, dittos, answering questions from textbooks, summarizing books for reports, and assigned reports about famous people. Their pre-exiting concepts of writing could have been the teacher-directed report writing.

The students' attitudes towards writing were assessed through the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students in September 1991 and again in April 1992. The scale was divided into three clusters: preference for writing, perception of writing, and process of writing.

The pre- and post-scores in the preference for writing cluster indicated if the subjects' overall preferences for writing has increased or decreased. The perception for writing

cluster included questions which indicated the subjects' perceptions of themselves as writer as well as their perceptions of others as writers. The process of writing cluster addressed items as revision practices and topic choice.

The scoring of the items in the survey were in the form of a Likert five-point scale: Almost always (5), often (4), sometimes (3), seldom (2), almost never (1). Five was the most desirable score while one the least.

The fifth grade students had to answer survey questions which were read aloud by the teacher to avoid any misinterpretations by the students due to reading difficulties.

The validity, reliability, and normative data of the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students was used in a 1977-1978 study of the New Jersey Writing Project. Twenty-five teachers and sixteen hundred students participated in this study.

Notebooks for journal use were distributed on the first day of school. Daily entries were made for the first month of school. Some students used their journals as dialogue between the teacher and themselves. Many student recorded important events as well as daily entries.

The students were introduced to process writing in a writing workshop classroom setting. At the beginning, topics were brainstormed, and students were instructed to write silently for a period of ten minutes. After silent-writing, the students shared their writing with their partner or small group.

The teacher also wrote during silent writing period to show the students that writing did not stop at adulthood. This was to show the students that writing is important since the teacher engaged in the activity. The teacher not only served as a role model by writing but also by discussing the process of writing.

Through the year, a variety of teacher-selected topics and genres were assigned along with literature studies. Within the genre studies and the non-fiction writing, students chose their topic, drafted, revised, edited, and planned their presentations. This was consistent with a process writing approach, with writers being in charge of their writing.

Seven months later, after learning writing as process, a post-survey was given. The Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students was readministered in April 1992. The questions again were read aloud by the teacher while the students read

along, then responded to the questions designed to measure their preferences for writing, perceptions of writing, and processes of writing.

It was noted that determination could not be made as to whether the students were answering the survey questions to meet the teacher's expectation or whether they were expressing their own real feelings.

The results shown for preference for writing that both girls and boys showed a significant difference at the .01 level in their preferences for writing. The girls' means went from 31.67 to 37.5. The boy's means went from 28.82 to 37.73.

Students wrote in a variety of forms. The differences between the writing of girls and boys were noted. Boys wrote about adventures. The girls wrote poetry, holiday stories, and stories about everyday activities. Both groups included themselves and their friends as story characters.

Journal that were given out at the beginning of the year were to be used at specific time. The students had the option to write in their journals whenever they wanted. As the year progressed so did the students' involvement in journal writing.

The girls wrote and submitted their journals for teacher response.

The increase in positive attitudes toward writing was further indicated by the majority of students who chose writing over other activities during "free time." Many students voluntarily wrote at home and brought their work into class to share.

Another study conducted by Katrena C. Howard (1992) investigating the effectiveness of the Writing Express program. In the Dekalb School District in the state of Georgia, 895 second-grade students in six Writing Express schools and 6 non-Writing Express schools were pre- and post-tested in writing and spelling using the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores and schoolwide percentage of free and reduced lunch. At least one researcher and sometimes two observed in all of the experimental classrooms shortly after the program had been implemented and then again toward the end of the school year to identify any improvements or changes. Researchers provided feedback to the program coordinator throughout the evaluation process, although the six experimental schools were not identified to the coordinator until the study was completed.

Data sources were collected from numerous sources and triangulated where possible. Quantitative data sources were ITBS achievement test scores, pre- and post-writing and spelling samples, a computer technology checklist, and a teacher questionnaire administered to all teachers in the system implementing the program. Throughout the evaluation process, the program coordinator provided input into the contents of the teacher questionnaire, writing and spelling samples, administration procedures, and the computer technology checklist. Qualitative data sources included comments from the teacher questionnaire, field notes from teacher training and from classroom observations, and informal teacher and student interviews. The qualitative data helped to answer to answer the why regarding some of the quantitative results.

Because students were not randomly assigned to treatment, group scores were used for matching. Alternative statistical control of possible sources of errors was made by using the pre-spelling scores, pre-writing scores and gender of each student as base line data. Gender is known to influence achievement in the early grades, and pre-spelling and pre-writing are indirect measures of parents' education. Analysis of variance and t-tests were conducted to determine if Writing Express made a difference to student scores in the experimental

schools as a group or when matched with student scores in the control schools. A regression analyses was conducted to estimate the separate effects of the Writing Express treatment in comparison to the pre-spelling, pre-writing, and gender on the posttest scores.

The limitations of the experiment consisted of three variables: dependent variables, independent variables, and control of the sources of error.

The limitation of the dependent variables consisted of the ITBS items as an outcome measure were not directly related to the content taught. The expectation which was that because the skills to be developed in the treatment were correlated to the same skills in the school curriculum, building for transfer would take place and the effects would be reflected on the ITBS scores. The writing measure was not discriminating enough to measure growth of those students who scored high on the pretest. For example, a student who scored 29 on the pretest would fail to show much gain if he/she scored the maximum of 32 on the posttest. Writing samples were scored by one rater; two would have been more desirable but time and staff were issues that had to be considered. Scorers were trained but the Writer Express program coordinator and her assistant attended the

training and provided input throughout the session. Interrater reliability was established at the end of the training. Scores were spot checked by the trainer. Students' pre- and post-writing samples may have been hampered because of using paper and pencil rather than the computer. There is a possibility that the non-treatment group may have been at an advantage because the treatment students practiced on the computer.

The limitation for the independent variables group consists of the experimental schools which were implemented in the first year. Teachers knew that the Writing Express program was being evaluated and that their schools were in the study which could result in the Hawthorne Effect. The students in both the treatment and the control schools were not randomly assigned. The evaluators had no way of knowing that the matching on free and reduced lunch would actually translate to matching of parental education and income, even though this was the most available and the most used indication by researchers. The schools' average ITBS scores were used by observations to match the schools, and there was no way to know whether the normal distributions within and between the two sets of classrooms were the same since no statistical tests were conducted. The teacher effect could have differed in the two sets of schools,

although all teachers had received satisfactory evaluations on the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program, the state's official teacher evaluation program.

The control sources of error was made possible by holding independent variables constant except the treatment was difficult to implement in practice. To counteract the above, pre-writing and pre-spelling scores were used as baseline measures of performance to determine in a regression analysis of the data their separate effects when compared to the treatment. Different raters scored the students' pre- and post-writing samples to control interrater bias. Gender effects were also determined in relation to the treatment. The posttest scores were used as the main dependent variables, although the gain scores were used as a source of reference.

The results of an analysis of variance on the variables for which posttest data are available indicated limited program effectiveness. The mean post-spelling and writing as well as the gain scores were marginally higher for students in the experimental than in the control schools. The ITBS scores were marginally higher in the control schools than in the experimental schools.

The conclusions of this study shows that statistical analyses of student achievement data, teacher questionnaire results, and observations triangulate to support the following: The Writing Express program in the six experimental schools did not make a significant contribution to posttest scores in spelling, writing, ITBS vocabulary, reading, or total language scores. Differences in posttest scores among students in both the experimental and control schools were explained by their pre-spelling and pre-writing scores indicating that skills that students had upon entering the program rather than treatment determined posttest scores. Gender also made a small but significant contribution to posttest scores in spelling, writing, and total ITBS scores, indicating that females in both the experimental and control schools gained more than males in the second grade. Teachers questionnaire responses indicated that the majority of students made significant gains in the overall program goals of written expression, reading skills, spelling, and computer literacy as a result of the Writing Express program. Teachers did not indicate that their students made significant gains after one thematic unit in the discrete skill areas related to program goals. This failure to show gains in skill areas was confirmed by statistical analyses of the student achievement data.

Barbara Danoff (1993) examines the effectiveness of embedding strategy instruction in the context of a process approach to writing.

The study took place in a suburban elementary school located in the northeastern United States. The school had a population of approximately 370 students representing a diverse range of races and cultures. A whole-language approach to literacy instruction was emphasized by the teacher in this school.

The participants were four fifth-grade and two fourth-grade students from the classrooms described. Two of the fifth-grade, one male and one female and one of the fourth-grade students, a female, had been identified as having a learning disability by the school district. Because the problems associated with the validity of the LD label and the heterogeneity of school-identified LD populations, these three students had to meet three additional criteria; IQ scores on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children- Revised.

The remaining participants, two fifth-grade students and one fourth grade student, were "normally achieving" classmates of the three students with LD. Each of these students had been nominated by their respective general classroom teacher as being

competent, but not outstanding, writers.

The six participants formed three data collection pair, one for each of the participating classrooms; these students did not receive instruction together or instruction together. Instruction was delivered to all students in the classrooms. Each data collection pair included a student with LD and a normally achieving student. The students in each pair were of the same sex, grade, and race. The only exception was that the two fourth-grade students were not of the same race. The student with the LD was Asian, whereas the normally achieving student was Hispanic. All of the other participants were Caucasians.

In the investigation, fourth- and fifth-grade students with and without a learning disability were taught a strategy for planning and writing stories as well as procedures for regulating their use of the strategy and the writing process. The teachers felt that all of the students would benefit from the instruction, the writing strategy and self-regulation procedures were taught to all of the students in threee writing classes, each containing one of the subjects with LD. The students had a period for writers' workshop as well as writing throughout the school day. The students were able to chose

their own topic and genre, determined the content and purpose of their writing, selected pieces for completion and publication, and consulted with other students when planning and revising their work.

To insure that the strategy instructional procedures were implemented as, each instructional procedure included in each of the daily lesson plans was checked off by the teacher as it was completed.

Data collection and scoring were acumulated by use of pictures that were used as the writing stimuli for the basedline, instruction, postinstruction, generalization, and maintenance story probes.

All writing probes were administered during writers' workshop by hthe special education teacher. The regular classroom teacher administered the generalization story probe.

For each story element, a score of 0 was awarded if the element was not present in the student's story, a score of 1 was awarded if the element was present, and a score of 2 was awarded if the element was highly developed. An additional point was awarded if two or more goals were articulated in the

student's story. Scores were first determined for each element separately. The individual elements were scored to obtain a total story grammar element which was at least 19 points.

Evidence on the validity of the story grammar scale had been obtained in several separate investigations. Researchers found that students' scores on the story grammar scale correlated significantly with other measures of story structure with performance on a standardized writing test. The scale was sensitive to the effects of an instructional program designed to improve the schematic structure of students' stories.

Process approaches to writing instruction usually emphasized the cognitive processes and strategies central to effective writing by encouraging students to plan and revise, providing feedback and assistance in carrying out the processes during individual or group writing conferences, creating learning communities where students assist each other in planning and revising their texts, and delivering process oriented instruction through mini-lesson.

Danoff found that the strategy instructional procedures had a positive effect on the fourth- and fifth-grade students' writing, for both students with and without a learning

disability. This study shows that there was improvements in story quality were maintained and generalized by all of the students.

Rebecca P. Harlin and Sally E. Lipa (1993) conducted an assessment about the children's beliefs and perceptions about process writing. This study took place in western New York where the writing process had been implemented. The sample studied consisted of three grade levels groups: grades one and two (n=32); grades three and four (n=32); and grades five and six (n=32) for a total of 96 students. The number of boys and girls in each group were equal.

Materials used were developed by the researcher and a colleague. It consisted of a 30-item Harlin-Lipa Writing Interview.

The procedures were implemented by interviewing each subject individually by the researcher or a graduate student outside of the classroom. The subjects responses were recorded on the interview form such as audiotape recordings of the interviews provided the opportunity to review responses for accuracy. The students were assured that their responses would not be shared with their classroom teacher. The interviews took place

over a period of 30 minutes.

Students were asked about the knowledge of the writing process. Questions asked for example were: What is writing? Responses to this question varied from group to group. Surface responses were most frequent among the first grade and second graders (79%), dropping to 50% for grades three and four; and 28% for grades five and six. The younger students responses included spelling, making marks on paper, and printing. Older students defined writing as putting thoughts and ideas on paper, making sense, or a learning process. The students viewed writing as being more difficult than reading. This perception became stronger with the older students. Percentages in grades one and two were 44% ; grades three and four were 59%; and grades five and six were 69%. Most of the students were aware of the connection between the processes, indicating that writing did help them read.

Some of the process were learned earlier than others but with time the students had come to understand the purpose of each step. The students needed the opportunity to write for different audiences and purposes in order to become knowledgeable about the process. While some students had the opportunity at home, others needed to rely on the school setting to provide

an experience. The students shift their focus from features of writing to the communicative features as long as their experiences across time consistently reinforce the view. Teachers needed to provide the model necessary for young children to understand the process by sharing their own writing frequently and by being consistent in their responses to young writers during conferences.

The purpose of a study conducted by Kathryn L. Laframboise and Janell Klesius (1993) was to determine to what extent children in a large southern state, are given the opportunities to engage in process writing and to determine whether teachers have incorporated activities and strategies supported by current research findings on process writing into their language arts programs.

A random sample of 67 counties in the state of Florida was taken. The median for the 67 counties was 9,970. The mean was 25,678;16 counties had a school population above the mean, and 53 counties were below the mean. Counties were stratified to insure that counties of different sizes would be represented in the sample. An assumption based on experience in the schools, that different factors influenced the implementation of curriculum in counties of different sizes.

The survey asked teachers to self-report on the organization of language arts curriculum within individual classrooms, sources of curriculum content, and types and time allotments of writing activities. The survey was initially drafted by the researchers and reviewed by faculty in the reading/language arts department. The survey was conducted to determine and analyze the following information: (1) sources of content and instructional materials used in the language arts curriculum. (2) organizational patterns used in language arts instruction. (3) time spent in various types of writing. and (4) time spent in the stages of process writing.

The survey was pilot tested with 18 classroom teachers enrolled in a master's level language arts course. These teachers taught in kindergarten through grade 6 and brought to the survey experiences and viewpoints representative of elementary school teachers. Teachers were asked to answer the survey questions and write comments about items that were ambiguous or did not reflect actual classroom practice.

The results of the surveys were returned by 287 teachers in 23 schools in 13 counties. Teachers were asked to describe the organizational set-up of their language arts instruction. 6.4% (n=18) of the teachers wrote that the components of language

arts instruction, e.g., reading , writing, grammar, spelling, and handwriting, were taught by more than one teacher. In 23.0% (n=65) of the classes, one teacher was responsible for the language arts instruction but the components were taught in different time blocks. An additional 21.6% (n=61) described their language arts instruction as occurring during a single block of time, although the instruction of the several components was separate. Language arts instruction was taught within a single block of time and with the components integrated by 45.2% (n=128) of the teachers. In this organizational set-up, the children's reading materials and their own writing provide the content for spelling, grammar, and handwriting instruction. Finally, 3.9% (n=11) of the teachers indicated that instruction was organized in some other manner, such as in theme units throughout the day.

Process writing had been implemented in many counties using a massive effort at staff development through inservice workshops, and conferences. The formats were considered inadequate for helping teachers making the transition from theory to practice because of their limited time-frame and setting away from the classroom. According to the study, teachers needed reasons for engaging students in extensive writing activities such as developing understanding of the alphabetic principle,

phonemic awareness, writing fluency, reading vocabulary and comprehension, and spelling ability. The disparity in prewriting and writing times among the counties may reflect the factors. Differences noted in the amounts of time spent in prewriting and writing in small versus medium or large counties may be accounted for and by the availability of resources for staff development. Counties closer to universities and/or metropolitan areas were to be consider better able to meet inservice needs as an on-going process while outlying districts would have to rely more on workshops and conference attendance.

The study suggests that strides were made in implementing process writing in classrooms. It showed a need to search for effective inservice models that better facilitate putting theory into practice. Problem solving with peers while making innovations may be critical. Alternative strategies can be identified for other groups of students for various classroom contexts, and for smoother implementation of the innovations.

Mary Ellen Varble conducted a study that examine the quality of writing of second and sixth graders who were taught by whole language and traditional approach to writing in the counties of Cly, Greene, Owen, and Vigo in Indiana.

The initial procedure for conducting this research was to identify teachers who had used one of the two writing approaches for the entire year. The sample population consisted of 248 students. The figures included 120 second graders (62 in the whole language group and 58 in the traditional group) and 128 sixth graders (62 in the whole language group and 66 in the traditional group). Classroom teachers were asked to complete the Writing Instruction Information sheet.

Varble analyzed characteristics that identified traditional and whole language approaches from the traditional and whole language definitions of teachers who indicated on at least 8 out of 10 questions that they use the whole language approach were placed in the whole language group, and the students of teachers who indicated on at least 8 out of 10 questions that they used the tradition approach were placed in the traditional group.

All the students in the study participated in a 45 minute session that included 15 minutes for a prewriting activity and 30 minute for writing. All the sessions were held at the same time of day.

The results shows the differences effects between the

written samples of the subjects taught by the traditional approach and those taught by the whole language approach were of major importance to this study.

The findings had shown that the second graders who were taught by teachers using the whole language approach produced better writing samples when evaluated on meaning and content. There was no differences in writing samples in the correct use of mechanics of the second graders taught by either approach. There was no difference in writing samples of sixth graders taught by either approach. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine if whether these finding hold true at other grade levels.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Capitalization and Punctuation Raw Scores

Grade 3	Grade 4
60	100
50	60
25	60
20	60
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	20
20	

Appendix B

Main Idea and Supporting Details Raw Scores

Grade 3	Grade 4
100	100
100	100
83	100
83	100
83	100
83	100
83	83
83	83
83	83
80	67
67	60
50	

Appendix C

Revision Raw Scores

Grade 3	Grade 4
100	90
100	90
100	83
75	80
50	75
50	60
50	60
50	40
25	40
25	25
20	25
20	

Appendix D

Proofreading Raw Scores

Grade 3	Grade 4
80	100
50	83
50	80
50	80
50	75
50	50
50	50
50	25
50	25
40	25
25	20
20	